

AMENDED CLAIMS

Claims 1-13. (Cancelled).

14. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) A method for enclosing a packaging machine (~~100~~), characterized by comprising:

dividing said packaging machine (~~100~~) in into at least two separate work areas or portions, (~~110;130,120~~) each portion having a different operation task ~~tasks~~ and arranged one after another along a packaging line (~~2~~) of the packaging machine (~~100~~);

enclosing each of said work portions (~~110;130,120~~) by and within at least one enclosing chamber (~~3,4~~) for providing separate environments for protecting each respective said portion (~~110;130,120~~);

forming with within a first enclosing chamber at least one of said enclosing chambers (3) an environment maintained under pressure during operation of the respective work portion, and forming within a second enclosing chamber while at least another chamber (4) forms a closed environment, receiving air solely from the first enclosing chamber, whose pressure is maintained equal to an the outside pressure during operation of the respective work portion enclosed therein.

15. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said packaging machine (~~100~~) is an automatic machine, aimed at packaging pharmaceutical products in containers;

said work portions (~~110;130,120~~) of said packaging machine (~~100~~) being defined by a first work portion (~~120~~) including at least one station (~~121~~) for feeding said pharmaceutical products, and at least one second work portion (~~110~~) including at least one station (~~111~~) for production/feeding said containers;

said first enclosing chamber (~~3~~) with the pressurized environment enclosing said second work portion (~~110~~) and said second enclosing chamber (~~4~~) with a substantially constant pressure enclosing said first work portion (~~120~~) of said packaging machine (~~100~~).

16. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said packaging machine (~~100~~) includes also a third work portion (~~130~~) including at least one station (~~131~~) for closing said containers; said first enclosing chamber (3) with the pressurized environment enclosing said second and third portions ~~portion~~ (~~110,130~~).

17. (Withdrawn-Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said packaging machine (~~100~~) is a blistering machine for packaging pharmaceutical products in blister packs, in which said second work portion (~~110~~) includes a station (~~111~~) for forming blisters on a band material (~~115~~), to form, downstream of the station (~~111~~), a blister band (~~116~~); and said third work portion (~~130~~) including a station (~~131~~) for closing said blister band (~~116~~) with a corresponding band material.

18. (Currently Amended) An enclosing structure for a packaging machine, said packaging machine including at least two work portions having different operational tasks, arranged one after another along a packaging line of said packaging machine, the enclosing structure comprising:

enclosing panel-shaped means (~~P~~) assembled together to form at least two enclosing chambers for protecting each of said two work portions during operation of said packaging machine, a first enclosing chamber enclosing an environment at a pressure higher than an outside pressure and a second enclosing chamber enclosing an environment with a pressure equal to the outside pressure;

means for generating at least one flow of high pressure air delivered only into said first enclosing chamber for maintaining a pressurized environment therein;

passages only provided in said second enclosing chamber between the first enclosing chamber and the second enclosing chamber, the only air entering the second enclosure being permitted to pass solely to permit air to pass only from said first enclosing chamber with the pressurized environment to the second enclosing chamber with the

pressure equal to the outside pressure;

suction means for withdrawing air from an inside of said second enclosing chamber in an amount sufficient to maintain the pressure inside said second enclosing chamber substantially constant and equal to the outside pressure, during operation of said work portions within the enclosing structure;

means cooperating with said generating means and with said suction means for purifying a flow of air at an outlet of said second enclosing chamber.

19. (Currently Amended) A structure as claimed in claim 18, wherein said packaging machine is used for packaging pharmaceutical products in containers, said work portions being a first work portion including at least one station for feeding said pharmaceutical products, and a second work portion including at least one station for producing/feeding said containers, said first enclosing chamber providing a pressurized environment for enclosing said second work portion and said second enclosing chamber enclosing said first work portion of said packaging machine during operation thereof.

20. (Currently Amended) A structure as claimed in claim 19, wherein said packaging machine includes a third work portion having at least one station for closing said containers, said first enclosing chamber (~~3~~) providing a pressurized environment for enclosing said second and third portions during operation thereof.

21. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 19, wherein said packaging machine is a blistering machine for packaging pharmaceutical products in blister packs, said second work portion including a station for forming blisters on a band material, thereby forming a blister band, said third work portion including a station for closing said blister band.

22. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 21, wherein said first enclosing chamber has at least one mouth for allowing said band material to move forward in a

defined feeding direction (D) along said packaging line, said mouth having fluid-dynamic barrier means for acting on said band material to remove any contaminants therefrom.

23. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 18, wherein said first enclosing chamber includes a plurality of panels, said first enclosing chamber having an intermediate space (37), located in a connection area between two panels, said intermediate space allowing air present inside the first enclosing chamber (3) to exit the first chamber in a continuous flow.

24. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 18, wherein said generating means include at least one pump for drawing air from the outside environment and conveying the air through introduction ducts toward said first enclosing chamber, said purifying means including filter means for filtering the air before introducing the air into the first enclosing chamber; sensor means connected to said filter means for detecting variations in a volume of air flow and for sending control signals to a control unit, said control unit connected to means for operating said pump.

25. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 24, wherein said filter means comprise a main filter located in said introduction ducts downstream of said pump and having first sensor means connected thereto, and, a secondary filter located upstream of said pump and having second sensor means connected thereto.

26. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 25, wherein said first and second sensor means are differential manostats for measuring a difference in pressure upstream versus downstream of each respective filter.

27. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 18, wherein said suction means include an outlet duct connecting said second enclosing chamber to a suction group, at

least one valve located in said outlet duct and having a variable aperture, so as to vary a quantity of air withdrawn from said second enclosing chamber, a central adjustment unit controlling the aperture of said valve to adjust the air flow withdrawn from said second enclosing chamber, and, flow measuring means located in said outlet duct and connected to said central adjustment unit for measuring said flow of air withdrawn from said second enclosing chamber and for sending a control signal to the central adjustment unit for adjusting the air flow withdrawn from said second chamber.

28. (Previously Presented) A structure as claimed in claim 27, wherein said flow measuring means include a differential manostat sensor.